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SUBJECT: Media Reaction - Op-ed on the pirate standoff in Somalia

I. On April 14, the independent liberal Stockholm tabloid "Expressen" published a signed op-ed by Mats Larsson, Foreign Editor headlined 'Now the pirates have aggravated the wrong president':

"Barack Obama yesterday added one more goal for his foreign policy. The United States will put a stop to piracy off the Somalian coast. It was no coincidence that he made the statement yesterday. Only a few hours earlier, the 53-year-old American Captain Richard Phillips, had been liberated by American elite soldiers from a life boat in the Indian Ocean....

"In the White House, Obama was continuously kept informed about the situation in the Indian Ocean. Outwards it was said the President played no decisive role, but in actual fact he was briefed at least 17 times since his return from his tour in Europe, Turkey and Iraq last week. And it was eventually Obama himself who gave the order to launch the rescue operation....

"On Saturday night reinforcements arrived. A group of American Navy Seals parachuted over the ocean and were picked up by the USS Bainbridge. The group included snipers....

"The French hostage crisis that partly ran parallel did not end as happily as it was resolved on Friday....

"The question is what happens now after the French and American raids. The risk is that the violence will escalate....

"It remains to be seen if Barack Obama is serious about his threats against the pirates....

"It remains to be seen if Barack Obama dares [attack the bases]. The United States was seriously stung in the hornet's nest of Somalia in 1993, when two American helicopters were shot down over the capital Mogadishu and 18 soldiers killed. Since then the United States has kept away."

SILVERMAN